

Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory Group (PMPAG)
Monthly Meeting
SMT 4050/4060
September 28, 2007
8 – 10 am

Meeting Summary

Attendance (19)

Ana Brown, James Bush, Rebecca Deehr, Brian Dougherty, Celeste Gilman, Tony Gomez, Jean Healy, Tom Im, Rob Kaufman, Bea Kumasaka, Kate Martin, Steve Marquardt, Paul Niebanck, Paulo Nunes-Ueno, Charles (Chas) Redmond, Jim Schultz, Richard Staudt, Preston Tinsley, and BettyLou Valentine.

Benita Horn (facilitator) and Seattle City staff: Wayne Wentz, Susan Sánchez, Tracy Krawczyk, Susan Mueller, Barbara Gray, Megan Hoyt, Hannah McIntosh, Jodie Vice, Barbara Clemons, Mike Mann and Traci Ratzliff.

As the newly-elected co-chairs of the PMPAG, Becca Deehr and Paulo Nunes-Ueno led the meeting.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Staff Report

Barbara Gray, SDOT, passed out a written staff report and then ceded her agenda time to Mike Mann, Executive Manager of Infrastructure in the Mayor's Office of Policy and Management, to talk briefly about items in the proposed 2008 budget relating to pedestrian issues. Proposed budget items include:

- \$5.6 million through Bridging the Gap for sidewalk construction and repair, pedestrian signals, and other amenities
- \$4 million for Neighborhood Street Fund projects
- \$1.7 million for increased red light cameras
- \$1 million for initial activity on a Lake Union trail

There is continued council debate over other items to be included. In addition, the Mayor's office is working on two pedestrian-related policy issues:

- A proposal to "raise the bar" on sidewalk construction requirements for new development
- A proposal to incrementally underground electrical utilities

Mike also commended the draft Pedestrian Master Plan outreach strategy as a starting point and encouraged the group to work hard to engage under-represented communities.

Members of the PMPAG then had a handful of questions. It was asked what was being done about the vast majority of sidewalks in the city that are adjoining property owners' responsibilities, to which Mike responded that he did not know but would find out. It was also asked who in the city is tasked with tracking all investments for pedestrian infrastructure and their inter-relationship. Mike responded that his office is the one that tracks those investments. Finally, a request was made for the following information:

- An explanation of what percentage is devoted to pedestrian projects out of the whole transportation budget
- A published list of all transportation projects

Finally, concern was expressed that the Complete Streets ordinance was not being implemented and that input from a wider group of stakeholders needs to be obtained before the Pedestrian Master plan is drafted.

Rob Kaufman then made a brief announcement on the results of the Pedestrian Cash Data Study. More detailed information can be found at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/menuitem.3525b237b7215dd24ec86e10dba046a0/>

In summarizing study results, Rob mentioned that:

- Speed is generally a factor in pedestrian collisions.
- Pedestrians hit by light truck vehicles, which currently make up one half the vehicle fleet in America, are three times more likely to be killed.
- Many people who are being hit by cars are running across the street.
- Stop lines can provide a “cushion”, but they are generally only present at signalized (not unsignalized) mid-block crossings.

Tony Gomez then briefed the group on research being done in the Oakland/San Francisco Bay Area on the percentage of drivers and pedestrians who actually know the law. In addition, he commended the fact that the Mayor’s budget includes increased funding for the “DUI squad”, as one third of all pedestrian fatalities involve alcohol.

The point was made and seconded that the recommended behavior changes for pedestrians are lopsided. For instance, when a pedestrian sees a flashing “Don’t Walk” hand, he or she is cautioned to stay at the curb, but when a driver sees a yellow light, there is relatively high tolerance for the fact that he or she will probably accelerate through the intersection.

Surprise was also expressed over the fact that crash data in the report was sorted by race. Tony responded that a disproportionately high number of people in the Asian and Pacific Islander group are being hit and that it warrants further study.

Review and Comment on Planning Approach Timeline

Paulo and Becca explained that the goal of this agenda item was to make a clear recommendation for SDOT on moving forward with the draft timeline. The following questions, comments and concerns arose as part of the discussion:

- It would be helpful for the PMPAG to see which items are SDOT responsibility and which are PMPAG responsibility.
- The plan scope needs to be complete before an RFQ is written and a consultant selected.
- The data collection and analysis portion of the timeline needs to be clarified – who is doing what and when?

As a result of the discussion a motion was made:

- Motion: That the PMPAG tell SDOT to move forward with the draft timeline
- Vote: Yes (8); No (9); Abstain (2)
- Result: The PMPAG will not tell SDOT to move forward with the draft timeline

PMPAG members then asked Barbara Gray and Susan Sánchez, SDOT, to give them a sense for the implications of delaying on the timeline. Barbara and Susan expressed strong concern that delay would compromise SDOT’s ability to deliver a quality product within the committed timeframe, particularly with the heavy emphasis given to public participation in the process.

Another motion was then made regarding the timeline:

- Motion: That the timeline be revised to extend Activity #4, Scope Development and Consultant Selection, from December 2007 to February 2008

- Amendment: That Activity #4 be divided into two activities – amendment accepted
- Amendment: That the new timeline include a clear delineation of responsibilities – amendment accepted
- Vote: Yes (6); No (10); Abstain (3)
- Result: The timeline will not be revised to extend Activity #4 from December 2007 to February 2008

Because guests were waiting to speak, the group moved to the next agenda item without resolution on the timeline.

Review of Draft Consultant Request for Qualifications

The PMPAG heard from David Hiller and Patrick McGrath, Cascade Bicycle Club, on their experience working on the advisory group for the recently completed Bicycle Master Plan. David and Patrick's comments included the following general points:

- The Bicycle Master Plan advisory group had the benefit of being a small group of citizens who already knew each other well. There was little risk of offending people and they could immediately jump into the issues.
- The data on both bicycle and pedestrian travel is not great. We are only about ten years into collecting good data, which can be frustrating.
- However, the group did its best work when anecdotes were brought in to illustrate points in the data, rather than as a starting point in themselves.
- Communities are a valuable resource and have an immense amount of information to share.
- The public outreach process is best managed by consultants. They are the experts.

They also talked specifically about the consultant selection process. The scope of work for the Bicycle Master Plan Request for Qualifications process was refined over time to one page listing about 10 points. The scope of work development took about three months, meeting one time per month. The shortness of the document denoted trust in the group and in City staff, which was essential for a collaborative effort. The RFQ received about 11 responses, of which three made the first cut. Group interviews were conducted, with time allowed for questions from the audience. The process was very transparent. The consultant selection process really focused on finding a group that could excel at public outreach.

Roundtable Discussion: Elements of the Master Plan

After the Bicycle Master Plan presentation, each member of the group spent time specifying which topics were crucial to address in the Pedestrian Master Plan. The small-group conversation was organized around the "Five E's" listed in council resolution 30951: Education, Enforcement, Engineering, Encouragement and Evaluation. A concern was raised as to whether these five categories were a useful way to organize the exercise. The exercise proceeded as planned. (The comments are listed below exactly as they were written, but will be re-organized and edited for further work on the plan scope.)

Evaluation

- Collect data to evaluate the pedestrian environment
 - Crash data – get consistent definitions for crash data (e.g., disabling vs serious)
 - Injuries
 - Fatalities
 - Location
 - Rates
 - Numbers
 - Sub-populations

- Vehicles vs peds/vehicles vs bikes
 - Other circumstances
 - People with disabilities
- Infrastructure
 - Existing inventories
 - Sidewalk
 - Curb ramp
 - Crosswalks
 - Transit stops
 - Speed/volume information
- Land use/ zoning
- Demographics
 - Health/chronic disease
 - People with disabilities
 - Age, etc
- Identify a consultant with urban experience
- Push the envelope on Seattle's current set of issues:
 - Climate action
 - Environmental sustainability
 - Complete Streets
- Look for consultant who can help us push beyond traditional engineering practices
- Evaluate all transportation projects to see if they are sustainable, meet the Complete Streets ordinance and federal standards.
- Evaluate if authentic cross-boundary collaboration and citizen participation has occurred
- Evaluate biases on who is being served
 - Particularly biases against older students (everybody not covered by Safe Routes to School)
- Evaluate how policies are inconsistent with US standards
- Evaluate the idea of traffic calming on every residential street
- Evaluate option of building sidewalks by Seattle sidewalks authority
- Evaluation distribution geographically of all transportation projects for equity
- Knowledge, attitude, behavior surveys – survey knowledge of pedestrian and driver laws, including a baseline of driver and pedestrian behavior in general and at problem intersections
 - Look at WSDOT surveys – if people are walking, why or why not?
- How does the content of this plan advance us from the status quo – and measure it
- Measure responsibility, authority and oversight

Engineering/Environment

- Narrower streets
- Eliminate access barriers
- More sidewalks
- Reconnect neighborhoods that freeways and arterials have separated
- Universal accessibility for everyone's use
- Environmental protection and sustainability
- Engineering collaboration between agencies
- More transit and transit modes (other than commuter buses like personal rapid transit)
- Distribute improvements geographically to all neighborhoods
- Take land use into account
- Eliminate removal of crosswalks
- Complete Streets
- Ped priority zones in bus districts

- Sidewalk completion
- Establish predictable right of way ratios (e.g. 40% to ped/bike systems and 60% to moving other vehicles)
- Crosswalk safety especially at bus stops
- Limit on street parking
- Engineer budget for pedestrians
- Engineer policy to support traffic calming on residential streets
- Maintenance of pedestrian infrastructure
- Safe routes to school for all children
- Pre and post-evaluation of ped countdown signals
- Land use policy that encourages walking
- Confetti zoning – sprinkle mixed-use within walking distance – e.g. within ¼ mile of park and retails
- Show how plan fits within city goals for modes other than SOV. Elevate to a goal of the plan.
- Transit routing to address disability access issues – e.g. need a link when a stop is on a steep hill
- Reductions in speed limits
- Stop lines for vehicles – distance between crosswalks – especially mid-block and non-signalized intersections
- Engineer streets for speed limit reductions
- Ped signals: walk or stop – no blinking
- Ped signals at beginning of cycle
- More ped scrambles and all-way walks
- Focus on people who have difficulty getting out and being active – address the way in which it can be discouraging to face an environment where it is difficult to get out and interact with others
- Analyze signal synchronization along a corridor – does it encourage speed?

Encouragement

- Signage – social messaging around walking (potential partner = Seattle Police Dept)
- Walking programs (potential partners = Parks and Rec, Chambers of Commerce, Dept of Neighborhoods)
- Safe Routes to School (potential partner = Seattle Public Schools)
 - Look into organizing programs by geography or target user group
 - Could have neighborhood to neighborhood competitions
- Remember give-aways – pedometers are popular
- Events to model:
 - Fireman's walk in Columbia Tower
 - School Read-a-thons (Walk-a-thon)
 - Seattle Housing Authority's walking program at High Point – programs that link people together
- Pass out walking maps
- Engage worksite programs like Commute Trip Reduction
- Signage – wayfinding
- Focus on attitude – a reintroduction of consideration and regard for the other – ties directly into issues like speed and design
- Physical activity/public health angle – walking needs to be safe so that people can be encouraged to do it
- Look into the ways that numbers of people walking together help visibility and enthusiasm

Enforcement

- Speed enforcement

- Pedestrian safety enforcement
 - Regular enforcement
 - Emphasis enforcement
- Traffic division (Seattle Police Dept) – expand speed trap controls to enforce ped safety
- Change speed limits and then enforce
- School zones – increase enforcement
 - Add cameras
 - SDOT should audit speeds in zones
- High pedestrian activity areas
 - Collect data to ID areas
 - Focus enforcement in these areas
- Consistently enforce jaywalking, running, being in crosswalk at wrong time
- Officers need orientation to define laws in favor of both pedestrians and vehicles (lax in terms of pedestrians)
- Enforce white cane laws and laws for drivers regarding guide dogs
- Enforce leash laws
- Enforce laws applicable to sidewalk maintenance and clearance
- Enforce parking laws – illegally parked cars block views
- Lower enforcement priority for pedestrian behavior (jaywalking)
- Provide specialized ped safety training for police officers
- Create pedestrian ombudsman position

Education

- Need to convene broad group
 - Peds
 - Cyclists
 - Drivers
 - Property owners
 - Tourists
 - Bus riders
 - Crossing guards
- Focus should be > 20 year fatality data
- Focus differently based on age
- Educate different groups and include attitudes
 - Public safety officers (police on the scene)
 - Persons learning to drive or re-educated persons
 - Advocate for continuing education for drivers (e.g. yellow light issues)
 - Educate bus/taxi drivers, public sector employees
- Model a program after the way Seattle manages garbage, which is an effective and broad campaign
- Include information for walkers on what to look out for – defensive walking
- Consider a component of safety education in school for children
- Social marketing campaign directed at drivers – develop slogan
- Educate state, county and city about bias against older kids in Safe Routes to School
- Educate the city of Seattle
 - Eliminate speeds that kill
 - Eliminate jaywalking tickets downtown
 - Sustainable ROW ratios
 - USDOT policies on Complete Streets
 - Traffic calming on all residential streets
 - “Confetti” zoning
 - Killing crosswalks at bus stops

- Lack of inter-agency coordination and authentic participation by citizens
- How sidewalks can be completed within five years following Greenwood sidewalk model
- Practical intervals between signalized crossings
- Reconnecting neighborhoods divided by arterials and freeways
- Voters said redistribute transportation for pedestrians
- Hand signal as signal to cross street

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Review and Comment on Planning Approach Timeline (continued)

Given the fact that the group had 10 extra minutes, a motion was made to conclude the timeline discussion from earlier in the agenda:

- Motion: That the PMPAG accept the planning approach timeline as a working document still subject to future revision, with the following changes:
 - Identify PMPAG and SDOT tasks
 - Add a scope of the plan task separate from consultant selection, extending through December 2007
 - Extend items #6 (data collection) and #8 (toolbox of strategies and solutions) through December 2008
- Vote: Yes (18); No (0); Abstain (0)
- Result: The PMPAG will accept the planning approach timeline as a working document with the changes listed above.

Barbara Gray also made an announcement regarding the accessibility training originally scheduled for the August PMPAG meeting. The new date is November 13, 8-10 am. The group will meet at the Seattle Center.

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 AM.

Action Items

All PMPAG members:

- If you have not yet done so, contact Barbara Gray (Barbara.Gray@seattle.gov or 206/615.0872) with your availability for the accessibility training.

Next Meeting

Date: Friday, October 26, 2007

Time: 8:00 – 10:00 am

Place: Seattle Municipal Tower, 40th Floor, Room 4050/4060